

## Message Text

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ORIGIN ARA-10

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TO ALL AMERICAN REPUBLIC DIPLOMATIC POSTS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 294354

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, OAS, CH

SUBJECT: HUMAN RIGHTS IN CHILE DISCUSSED IN OAS

1. SUMMARY: DEBATE TOOK PLACE IN OAS PERMANENT COUNCIL DECEMBER 2 WHEN US STATEMENT SALUTING CHILE'S RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS EVOKED VENEZUELAN CRITICISM OF GOC'S EXPULSION OF TWO HUMAN RIGHTS LAWYERS FOLLOWING OASGA IN SANTIAGO. VENEZUELAN CITED OBLIGATIONS CHILE HAD ASSUMED IN SPONSORING GA AND CALLED FOR RECONSIDERATION OF EXPULSION ORDER. US AND JAMAICA SPOKE IN SUPPORT OF VENEZUELAN POSITION. END SUMMARY.

2. AT REGULAR SESSION OF PERMANENT COUNCIL DECEMBER 1, DEPUTY US REP WHITE REQUESTED THE FLOOR TO OFFER BRIEF STATEMENT CONGRATULATING CHILE FOR RELEASING SEVERAL HUNDRED POLITICAL PRISONERS TWO WEEKS AGO. (TEXT BY SEPTTEL)

3. VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR MACHIN THEN TOOK THE FLOOR AND SECONDED CONGRATULATIONS BUT POINTED OUT THAT WHILE CHILE

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HAD TAKEN ONE STEP IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION, MUCH REMAINED

TO BE DONE. IN PARTICULAR, MACHIN SAID, GOC HAD

EXPULSED TWO LAWYERS, JAIME CASTILLO AND EUGENIO VELASCO. WHOSE ONLY CRIME WAS COOPERATING WITH THE INTER-AMERICAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION DURING THE VI OAS GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN SANTIAGO.

3. DRAWING ON CONTINGENCY GUIDANCE, WHITE SUPPORTED THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR'S COMMENTS AND ASSERTED OUR CONVICTION THAT CHILE HAD GIVEN OAS AN UNDERTAKING THAT ITS CITIZENS WOULD BE PERMITTED TO PROVIDE INFORMATION AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY WITHOUT FEAR OF RETALIATION. US REP CALLED ON CHILE TO FOLLOW UP LAUDABLE ACTION TO RELEASE UNCHARGED PRISONERS BY WITHDRAWING EXPULSION DECREE AGAINST VELASCO AND CASTILLO. (TEXT BY SEPTTEL)

4. IMMEDIATELY AFTER WHITE'S FIRST INTERVENTION, CHILE'S AMBASSADOR MARIA EUGENIA OYARZUN THANKED THE US FOR OPPORTUNE AND TIMELY PRAISE OF PRISONER RELEASE. LATER, SHE DEFENDED HER GOVERNMENT'S DECISION TO EXPEL VELASCO AND CASTILLO AND ACCUSED THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR OF INTERFERING IN CHILE'S INTERNAL AFFAIRS. SEVERAL VIGOROUS EXCHANGES ENSUED BETWEEN VENEZUELAN AND CHILEAN REPRESENTATIVES, MAINLY REPETITIONS OF ORIGINAL REMARKS.

5. JAMAICA'S AMBASSADOR STRONGLY ENDORSED US STATEMENT AND MADE PARTICULAR POINT OF OBLIGATIONS CHILE ASSUMED IN INVITING THE OAS TO SANTIAGO.

6. COMMENT: WHITE SPOKE WITH CHILEAN AMBASSADOR IN ADVANCE TO NOTIFY HER THAT HE INTENDED TO MAKE A STATEMENT LAUDING THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS. SHE EXPRESSED THANKS. AT CONCLUSION OF SESSION, WHITE TOLD HER THAT HIS STATEMENT HAD NOT BEEN INTENDED TO PROVOKE DEBATE. SHE ASKED IF "UNOFFICIALLY" THERE HAD BEEN ANY UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE VENEZUELAN AMBASSADOR AND THE U.S. DELEGATION. WHITE MADE EMPHATIC DENIAL BUT SAID US REP HAD CONTINGENCY INSTRUCTIONS REQUIRING SUPPORT FOR VENEZUELA'S MOTION IF AND WHEN HE SPOKE OUT ON THE CONFIDENTIAL

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SUBJECT OF EXPULSION ORDER AGAINST CASTILLO AND VELASCO.

AT RECEPTION THAT EVENING, TWO SENIOR CHILEAN DIPLOMATS APPROACHED WHITE SEPARATELY TO EXPRESS APPRECIATION FOR COMPLIMENT AND UNDERSTANDING FOR CRITICISM. EACH SAID, COMPLETELY UNOFFICIALLY, THAT EXPULSION ORDER HAD BEEN SERIOUS MISTAKE THAT HAD HUNG OVER CHILEAN OAS DELEGATION "LIKE SWORD OF DAMOCLES" AND GETTING PROBLEM OUT

IN THE OPEN WAS A RELIEF. THAT DEBATE HAD COME IN  
CONTEXT OF RECENT PRISONER RELEASE, WHICH ALSO RECEIVED  
OFFICIAL ATTENTION, WAS ON BALANCE ADVANTAGEOUS TO  
CHILE'S REPUTATION. KISSINGER

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